



Secular Buddhism: Imagining the Dharma in an Uncertain World

By Stephen Batchelor

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An essential collection of Stephen Batchelor's most probing and important work on secular Buddhism

As the practice of mindfulness permeates mainstream Western culture, more and more people are engaging in a traditional form of Buddhist meditation. However, many of these people have little interest in the religious aspects of Buddhism, and the practice occurs within secular contexts such as hospitals, schools, and the workplace. Is it possible to recover from the Buddhist teachings a vision of human flourishing that is secular rather than religious without compromising the integrity of the tradition? Is there an ethical framework that can underpin and contextualize these practices in a rapidly changing world?

In this collected volume of Stephen Batchelor's writings on these themes, he explores the complex implications of Buddhism's secularization. Ranging widely—from reincarnation, religious belief, and agnosticism to the role of the arts in Buddhist practice—he offers a detailed picture of contemporary Buddhism and its attempt to find a voice in the modern world.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Batchelor's work will undoubtedly appeal to many 'spiritual, but not religious' readers."—*Publishers Weekly*

"An audacious disquisition on Buddhism, universal dharma, reality, and suffering for the 21st century. Batchelor posits that for the deep wisdom of Buddhism to serve humanity fully in our time, it may have to transcend itself."—Jon Kabat-Zinn, author of *Full Catastrophe Living* and *Coming to Our Senses*

"Brilliant, illuminating, and thought-provoking, *After Buddhism* deserves the ultimate compliment for a work of this kind: it is useful. In probing the ancient scriptures in search of a Buddha we can relate to, Batchelor makes his dharma come thrillingly alive. A masterful achievement."—Mark Epstein, author of *Thoughts without a Thinker*

"In this remarkable book, Stephen Batchelor transcends Buddhist dogma to surface a vision of the dharma that goes right to the heart of our contemporary global culture. Through diligent scholarship and years of practice, the author sheds new and revelatory light on the dharma. This is a must-read for all students of Buddhism."—Joan Halifax, Abbot, Upaya Zen Center

"With exemplary lucidity, Stephen Batchelor demonstrates the relevance of an ancient thought and practice in our own era. There is much in it that illuminates and clarifies—for those acquainted with Buddhism as well as those coming to it for the first time."—Pankaj Mishra

"Drawing on insights gleaned during decades of intensive practice, study, and writing, Batchelor's essays demonstrate conclusively how the ancient texts of Buddhism speak directly to the needs of contemporary people living active, engaged lives in the world."—Robert E. Buswell, Jr., University of California, Los Angeles

About the Author

Stephen Batchelor is a teacher and scholar of Buddhism. He trained as a monk for ten years in traditional Buddhist communities and now presents a secular approach to Buddhist practice. The author of the bestselling *Buddhism without Beliefs*, he lives near Bordeaux, France.

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